

SHARPENING THE SWORD
Combat Readiness of the National Guard Combat Brigades
National War College 1992
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INTRODUCTION

$$\text{CAPABILITY} \times \text{WILL} = \text{DETERRENCE/SECURITY}$$

In the above equation, if either capability or will is zero, then deterrence and/or security will also be zero. As our country and the world goes through this transition from the Cold War to whatever is the future, it is America's challenge to ensure that military capability is sufficient to provide our country with the required deterrence.

After every major war, America has had a tendency to disarm because there was no perceived threat on the horizon. We have paid in blood for those mistakes. After this "victory" in the Cold War, we are again in the process of standing down our armed forces. Congress has mandated cuts to capitalize on a "peace dividend." While the military acknowledges that some reductions are justified, any cut in forces should be in accordance with a strategy that defines America's place in the world (vital interests), threats to those interests and provides sufficient forces to protect and defend the interests of the United States.

This transition period is further complicated by America's domestic problems. We must be careful not to make short-sighted decisions on national security matters to satisfy politically

motivated solutions to the economy. Predictably, Congress and the Department of Defense are at odds over almost every aspect of the defense budget. What and how much to cut from the budget is and will be the subject of much debate. Much of our country's future will depend upon the right balance of political maneuvering and sound national security strategy.

This paper will examine the Army capability portion of the above equation. It will review and outline several issues that are particularly relevant during this transition period. First we will look at the National Military Strategy (NMS) 1992 and Army requirements. Then we will outline the plans for downsizing the Army from FY91 strength levels (1.5M) to FY95 levels (1M) and the bureaucratic politics involved in that process. Congressional action to date has shown agreement in the reductions of active forces but reluctance to reduce the reserves. Some members of Congress are even advocating that in this "new world of peace," we should rely more on the National Guard and less on the Active Army.

The key question: do we want to entrust the security of our country in large part to the National Guard? This paper will also highlight some of the readiness problems that mitigate against greater reliance on the National Guard for national security. These problems were illustrated during the mobilization of the three National Guard roundout brigades for

Operation DESERT SHIELD.

NATIONAL MILITARY STRATEGY 1992

On August 2, 1992 the President articulated a new, regionally oriented national defense strategy while giving a speech in Aspen, Colorado. Since that speech, the National Security Strategy of the United States has driven the development of the National Military Strategy 1992. The NMS is built upon four foundations: Strategic Deterrence and Defense; Forward Presence; Crisis Response; and Reconstitution.¹ Army missions in the NMS are depicted in chart 1.

The fundamental objective of our armed forces will remain to deter aggression and, should deterrence fail, to defend the nation's vital interests against any potential foe. What has changed is the threat. With the break-up of the Soviet Union and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, "the threat is instability and being unprepared to handle a crisis or war that no one predicted or expected."²

The NMS postulates that "deterrence and crisis response dictate that we maintain a force which can respond quickly, prepared to fight upon arrival. This requirement demands ... an appropriate mix of active and reserve forces"³ "The capability to respond to regional crises is one of the key

Army Missions For the 1990's

NATIONAL MILITARY STRATEGY

FORWARD PRESENCE

- Land Force = Highest Commitment
- Basis for Land-based Power Projection
- Nation and Security Assistance
- Peacekeeping Operations

CRISIS RESPONSE

- Land-based Power Projection
- Forcible Entry Capable (Air/Land/Sea)
- Air/Sea Deployable
- Mobile, Lethal Armored Combat Forces (Overwhelming Force)
- Sustain Joint/Coalition Forces

RECONSTITUTION

- Major Conflict Forces
- Cadred Units
- Basis for Total Mobilization

CONTINGENCIES

PEACETIME
ENGAGEMENT

REGIONAL
CONFLICT

MAJOR
WAR

demands of our strategy US forces must therefore be able to respond rapidly to deter and, if necessary, to fight unilaterally or as part of a combined effort."⁴

"Our strategy is to resolve any conflict in which we become involved swiftly and decisively."⁵ "One of the essential elements of our national military strategy is the ability to rapidly assemble the forces needed to win"⁶ U.S. forces stationed in the United States or overseas "will be fully capable of worldwide employment on short notice,"⁷ while CINCs are charged to "... deploy and employ forces ... to rapidly and decisively resolve a military conflict."⁸

Notice how frequently the words "rapidly," "quickly" and "swiftly" are used. The key problem for the force planners is to design an Army to meet the requirements of the NMS. These often conflicting requirements have led to the concept of The Base Force as articulated by the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff.

"The United States must maintain the strength necessary to influence world events, deter would-be aggressors, guarantee free access to global markets, and encourage democratic and economic progress in an atmosphere of enhanced stability."⁹ This necessary "strength" is the Base Force as articulated in NMS 1992. The Base Force is not today's armed forces, but America's armed forces for 1995.

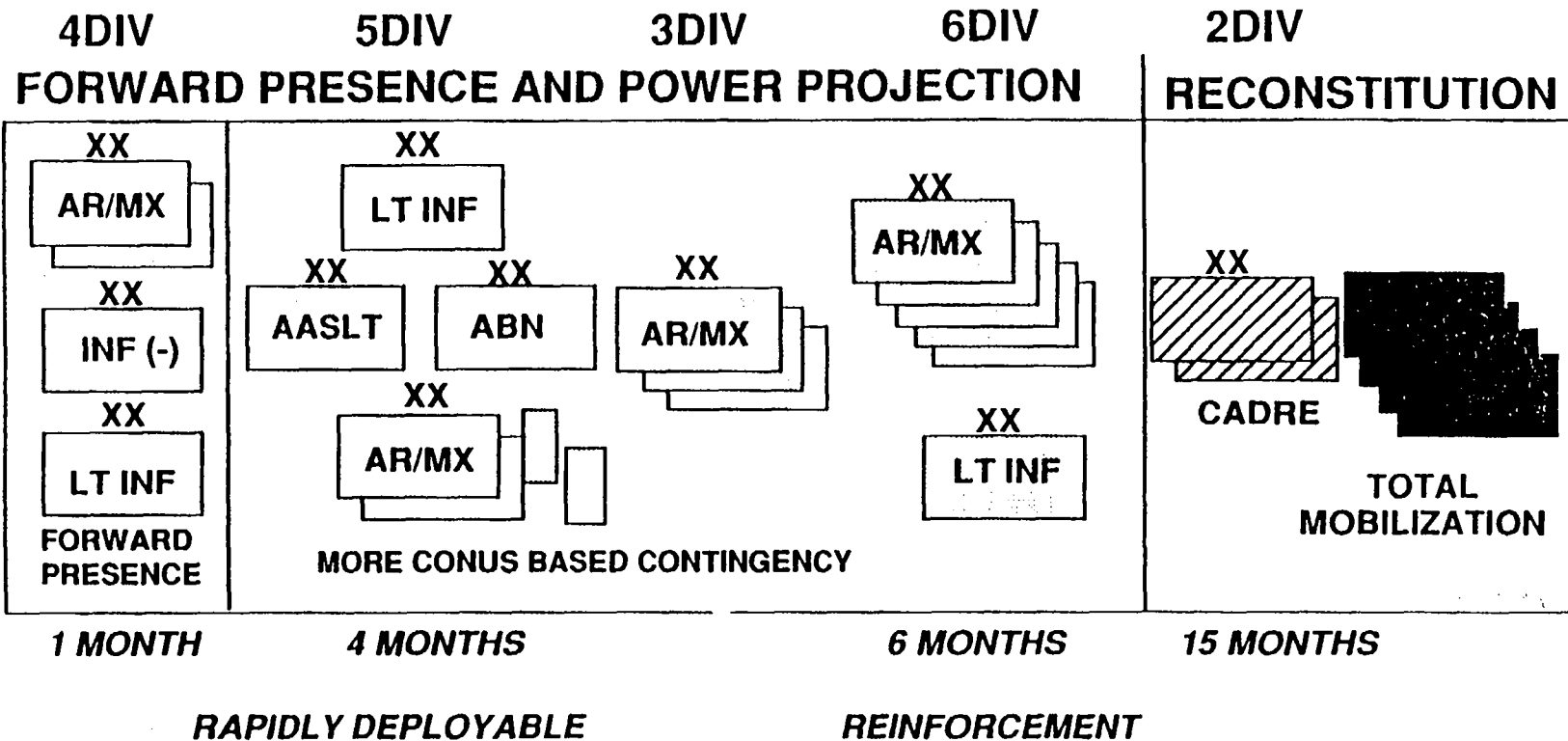
The Base Force is subdivided into four conceptual force packages: Pacific Forces, Atlantic Forces, Contingency Forces, and Strategic Forces. The Army has forces that will be allocated to the first three of the packages. These forces consist of 12 active divisions, six reserve divisions and two cadre divisions (See chart 2).

The Base Force was submitted to Congress in the 1991-95 President's Budget (PB). While the concept of the force was accepted by Congress, the composition of that force was altered by Congress during the FY92 appropriations process and continues to be debated today. What is the future of the Base Force? A review of the FY92 budget debate concerning Army force composition will provide a background for discussion of the future of this national security issue.

DOWNSIZING THE ARMY FY 91-95

In order to implement the NMS and execute Congressional mandates for reduction, the Army developed a plan to take active end strength (numbers of soldiers on active duty) from 781K (FY90) to 535K (FY95). The drawdown ramp was a product of the Total Army Analysis (TAA) process which bases the composition of the total force (Active and Reserve Component) upon assessments of current and potential threats to the nation and the capabilities required to meet these threats, tempered by

Generating The 20 DIV+ Force



ACTIVE UNITS
 RESERVE UNITS
 CADRE UNITS
 UNITS FORMED AFTER MOBILIZATION



considerations of affordability and risk. The following ramps were a product of TAA and were subsequently approved by the Department of Defense:

<u>FY</u>	<u>91</u>	<u>92</u>	<u>93</u>	<u>94</u>	<u>95</u>
<u>AC</u>	-22K	-50K	-42K	-42K	-42K
<u>RC</u>	0	-83K	-73K	-58K	-12K ¹⁰

The 1991-95 President's Budget accepted the Army plan and reflected the following end strengths (in thousands):

<u>FY</u>	<u>91</u>	<u>92</u>	<u>93</u>	<u>94</u>	<u>95</u>
<u>AC</u>	710	666	618	557	535
<u>RC</u>	776	694	621	562	550
<u>ARNG</u>	457	411	367	329	321
<u>USAR</u>	319	283	254	233	229 ¹¹

In March 1991, the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Plans (ODCSOPS) sent messages to the National Guard Bureau¹² and Chief, Army Reserve¹³ concerning FY 92-95 force reductions. On 1 and 3 April 91, respectively, both agencies submitted letters of non-concurrence. The reasons included significant reductions in General Officer and Colonel positions, force balance, current and historical unit readiness, Desert Storm participation, doctrinal requirements and available facilities.¹⁴

Not stated in the letters, but worthy of mention, is the bureaucratic resistance of an organization to radical reduction in size. The National Guard and Army Reserve have grown during the 1980's to the highest authorized strength levels since WW II. As these two organizations grew they planted roots in large and small towns across America. The Guard and Reserve not only meant serving our country, it meant jobs and money.

The political power of the National Guard and the Army Reserve is a reality that must be recognized. They have very active and powerful lobbies in the National Guard Association of the United States and The Reserve Officers Association. Additionally, Reserve Component (RC) units in small towns are a source of economic stimulation through salaries and contracts. The unit armory often serves as a focal point for social activities such as dinners, fund raisers, sports events and community meetings. The National Guard in each state is also on call to the state governor in the event of civil disturbances and natural disasters. The RC also represents a large voting bloc to the extent that one Congressman from Florida even attributes his election to the support of the Florida National Guard.

The reduction of active forces was never debated by Congress, but reduction of the reserves was hotly debated. Predictably, the Army's force reduction plans were changed by Congress. In November 1991 the Joint Authorization Conference

limited the inactivation of RC personnel to 28K in FY92 and 26K in FY93, 101K fewer reductions than called for in the PB for the same period.¹⁵ Without additional funding the Army would be required to pay for the retention of the RC forces at the expense of Active Component (AC) manpower, procurement, research and development, or readiness funds.

The National Defense Appropriations Act, 1992, represented a compromise between the Senate and the House. This Act approved the reductions for the AC, while adding RC end strengths of 54K more than was in the PB. Further the bill stated that "during the period of decreasing Defense budgets, it makes sense to put more, not less, force structure into the reserve components."¹⁶

The Army now faced the problem of how to program the force reductions in the RC from FY93 to FY95 in light of the 1992 Appropriations Act. The Army plan was three-fold:

1. Identify RC units for inactivation in FY92, plus those originally scheduled for FY92 but delayed until FY93.
2. Prioritize force structure to be retained based on the National Military Strategy and AirLand Battle doctrine.
3. Maximize annual reductions in FY93-95, considering executability and congressional reaction.¹⁷

The Army staff developed six options. The option approved

by the Secretary of Defense and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was to accept the congressionally mandated constraints for FY92, add the planned (but not executed) reductions from FY92 into the FY93 budget, return to the down-sizing ramp that was in the President's Budget, and continue to plan for a Reserve Component end strength of 550K for FY95. Both the Secretary and the Chairman felt that this was the only option that supported the Base Force. They remain committed to the Base Force because it is needed to support the National Military Strategy and meets current fiscal constraints. The debate between DOD and Congress will resume during the FY93 budget process.

Aside from the fiscal questions, what are the other problems posed by Congressional actions that seem to be going in the direction of more RC units, not less? The Army position is that with the reduction of active units there must be parallel reductions in the reserves because RC units are all aligned with AC units; i.e., when a Corps is eliminated from the force it has an RC tail that also must be removed. But in addition to complications with War Plans (what forces are apportioned to a particular War Plan) there is an even larger problem that is more fundamental to our national security -- combat readiness of the RC, especially National Guard roundout brigades.

READINESS OF THE ROUNDOUT BRIGADES

Among the relatively few questions about U.S. military performance which have surfaced following Operation DESERT STORM, those about Army National Guard (ARNG) combat brigades' combat readiness are the most troubling, and perhaps the most significant. Was ARNG training and readiness below combat standards? If so, why? Were standards unrealistically and unnecessarily high? Or were ARNG units unprepared because of systemic problems beyond their control?

What follows is not intended as an attack on the individual members of the Army Guard. The individual members of the Guard are patriotic Americans who try to be good soldiers. Rather, it is an attempt to highlight systemic problems that subvert combat readiness of the National Guard.

BACKGROUND

No sane leader would ever willingly commit his soldiers to war if he knew they were not properly prepared. Considering today's high-technology weapons systems and the complex nature of combined arms warfare, are "39" days a year enough to properly prepare the Guard soldiers for war? The Army's challenge is to make the best use of the annual training days available to the

National Guard and to ensure that sufficient time is allocated for during postmobilization training. Failure to deal with these issues could someday mean untrained soldiers committed to battle.

The Army has launched a major effort to discover the lessons learned as a result of the largest mobilization since World War II. The mobilization of the three National Guard roundout brigades for DESERT SHIELD/STORM has received a lot of attention. To date there have been three major studies published:

1. Department of the Army Inspector General, Special Assessment of the National Guards Brigades' Mobilization, June 91.
2. General Accounting Office, NATIONAL GUARD: Peacetime Training Did Not Adequately Prepare Combat Brigades for Gulf War, September 91.
3. Congressional Research Service, The Army's Roundout Concept After the Persian Gulf War, 22 October 91.

While the focus of each report was somewhat different, all three looked at premobilization training and drew similar conclusions. The studies cite systemic problems which can be summarized as follows:

-- Lack of individual, leader and crew skill

proficiency¹⁸

-- Lack of maintenance training at all levels, from drivers to supervisors, from battalion maintenance section to forward support battalion¹⁹

-- Lack of realistic training, especially force-on-force, night and chemical training²⁰

-- Lack of leader and staff development training²¹

-- Lack of leadership skills throughout the chain of command²²

-- Overstated unit status reports²³

-- Training plans that understated the number of postmobilization training days by as much as three times the number actually required.²⁴

Why is combat readiness of infantry/armor units so hard to achieve and sustain? These units are charged with direct fire combat with enemy forces. This combat is characterized by: speed; violence of action, sight and sound; instantaneous decisions ranging from whether or not to pull the trigger to lifting/shifting of fires to commitment of reserves at the required time and place; large numbers of injuries and death in

localized areas; and the knowledge that you must do all this again tomorrow.

Beyond all this, the infantry/armor battalion and brigade commanders are required to synchronize all battlefield operating systems. As defined by FM 100-5, Operations, synchronization is "the arrangement of battlefield activities in time, space and purpose to produce maximum relative combat power at the decisive point."²⁵ Easier said than done. Synchronization is a complex process that is planned and coordinated by commanders and staffs, but executed by everyone in the combined arms force.

Infantry/armor battalion and brigade commanders who fail in the synchronization process pay the price no other military commander has to face, large numbers of soldiers killed in direct fire engagements with the enemy.

TRAINING TIME

How can we possibly expect National Guard combat units to achieve the same training and evaluation standards as the Active Army? National Guard units have 39 days of training²⁶ while AC units have an average of 120 battalion (collective) training days per year. Leaders of AC units also have the time to send their subordinate leaders to professional development schools, a much harder task for ARNG leaders. Modernization of the National

Guard sent the right messages about the importance of the Guard to our nation's security, but modern weapons systems vastly complicate the training requirements of the National Guard commander.

Of the 39 annual training days, over half are inactive duty training (IDT) periods, commonly called weekend drills. My opinion, formed by six successive years of training and evaluation association with the National Guard,²⁷ is that the vast majority of IDT periods are not fully productive. As part of the association with two National Guard mechanized infantry battalions, I helped the commanders put together a yearly training schedule. Both battalions had plans that focused IDT at individual skill proficiency. Yet during the five Annual Training (AT) periods that I observed, individual skill proficiency was the most glaring weakness. The scheduled individual training either did not occur or was not conducted to standard. IDT is a tremendous challenge for the National Guard: unit armories spread across a state, poor to non-existent training areas, and vehicles and equipment at a far away Mobilization and Training Equipment Site (MATES). IDT periods are critical and must be used to the fullest extent possible, for unless IDT is productive, units will never achieve acceptable levels of collective training at AT.

Training focus in Guard combat units needs to be shifted

from battalion level to individual, crew/squad and platoon. Before one hour of collective training can be productive, each soldier and leader must be proficient on individual tasks associated with that collective task. In football, if the linemen can't pass block, the team can't execute a pass play. The same principle applies to military training.

Why should the National Guard focus collective training at the crew/squad and platoon level? Training Time. In August 1988 the Infantry School produced a list of infantry critical tasks that were determined "to be the most important tasks that infantry units must perform to ensure victory in combat."²⁸ There are 57 brigade tasks, 60 battalion tasks, 40 company tasks, and 60 squad/platoon tasks. Coupled with individual and leader training requirements and shortage of time, the ARNG faces an insurmountable problem.

The 60 squad/platoon tasks can be balanced against the specific mission requirements (Mission Essential Task Lists) so that the 60 tasks can be further reduced to a manageable level of skills and drills. These skills and drills then become the focal point for IDT.

SKILL PROFICIENCY/SKILL DECAY

Lack of individual and leader skill proficiency is the core

of National Guard training and operational readiness problems. If National Guard units arrive at Annual Training (AT-the two weeks of unit-level training usually conducted during the summer at some active duty post and evaluated by active duty officers) competent at the individual skill level, valuable time would be available for collective (unit) training at the squad and platoon level. Proficiency at the individual/leader level would also reduce postmobilization training time.

Individual and leader skill decay is the biggest training challenge for battalion commanders. The Army's Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) has produced the Mission Training Plans (MTP's) for most type units and they include a cross-walk between the collective tasks and the required soldier tasks. What is the magnitude of this challenge? For infantrymen there are 62 skill level (SL) 1 tasks, 38 SL2 tasks, 31 SL3 tasks, and 26 SL4 tasks. (These 157 tasks are in the addition to the multitude of Common Tasks.) All soldiers, NCOs and officers have been trained on these tasks at one time or another. Collective task proficiency is directly attributable to weak soldier skills, leader skills or both. TRADOC and the US Army Infantry School have studied skill decay and have concluded that we must design training to sustain skill proficiency.

National Guard units often report high Military Occupational Specialty Qualification (MOSQ) percentages.²⁹ These rates give

a very deceiving picture concerning combat readiness. Most NCOs have in fact graduated from a professional military school, but when one looks at graduation dates and what the NCO has done to sustain himself professionally, then the problem becomes clear. These NCOs are not proficient at their required skill level -- skill decay has taken its toll. And because these NCOs are not proficient they are not involved in or conduct poor training for their soldiers, contributing to IDT problems.

Modern weapons systems amplify training challenges. The level of proficiency required of individual members of a Bradley crew, an M1 crew, TACFIRE section or Apache crew is significantly higher than that required for the previous generation of systems. These great new systems demand that sustainment training be conducted daily or weekly. Active duty Bradley and M1 tank crews fight for time in the Unit Conduct of Fire Trainers (simulators) because they recognize that constant, repetitive practice is the key to proficiency.

Because of the limited training time in the National Guard, personnel turnover takes an even bigger toll on readiness: when a member of a National Guard tank crew departs, it could be up to two years before that crew has an opportunity to requalify.

MAINTENANCE

Maintenance training is also a critical weakness for ARNG combat units. National Guard units often display a "MATES Mindset." For most of the year the vehicles are maintained by civilian personnel at the MATES, which is a pool of military vehicles that are regionally located on military posts and used by reserve units that are within that geographic area. Therefore, these units don't develop a sense of ownership of their vehicles -- rather, they feel they are merely "renting" the vehicles for the training period. If a one breaks, they just tow it to the MATES and draw another. Drivers don't conduct maintenance because if their vehicle breaks, another is provided. The result: battalions do not have a real system of maintenance. Maintenance is training. The current system of National Guard maintenance does not provide the necessary maintenance training opportunities for personnel in the procedures required meet Army maintenance standards.

Maintenance training should be conducted during monthly weekend drills (IDT). This would cause some units problems, given the distance from equipment sites, but vehicles can be trucked to armories for IDT. Vehicle maintenance is an individual and leader task and must be trained more frequently than only at Annual Training. Drivers and leaders must know how to perform Preventive Maintenance Checks and Services (PMCS),

which is a series of before, during and after operations checks on the vehicle. PMCS is the very foundation of the maintenance system. A unit cannot have effective maintenance without PMCS. Again, this is a vital individual and leader skill proficiency requirement. Leaders must continually check to ensure compliance, and hence they must be proficient themselves.

At Annual Training units should not be permitted to return to the MATES once vehicles are drawn. If battalions were required to fix in the field as they would in war, the maintenance system would get exercised and all players in that system, from driver to mechanic to maintenance technician to forward support battalion, would get training.

Repair parts are another problem in the National Guard maintenance system. An example: During an annual National Guard unit evaluation I checked a company PLL (Prescribed Load Lists-- parts) truck and found over 100 total lines listed with a stockage level of over 90%. Good news on the surface, but only eight lines were for the M113 Armored Personnel Carrier (the primary vehicle of this battalion); the rest of the lines were small arms and radio parts. A check of the other companies of the battalion revealed similar problems. In fact, this same repair parts problem existed in both of my partner battalions. AC rifle companies routinely carry approximately 270 lines, of which 85% were vehicle related parts. Repair parts are the

lifeblood of a mechanized unit. For the first two months in Saudi Arabia some units had to subsist totally on the parts stockages that they brought from the States. We can't assume that the supply system will magically produce required parts just because we're deployed for war. There are costs associated with fixing this in National Guard units, but we're deluding ourselves if we think the problem will be solved at a postmobilization station or upon arrival in the wartime theater.

LEADERSHIP

The studies highlight two other areas that are directly related to training readiness. These areas are leadership and NCO proficiency. One of the most striking things when observing National Guard training is the lack of leaders at training. Training is certainly the most important thing that a unit does, but, too often, National Guard leaders are conspicuous by their absence. The reason is tied directly to leaders not being tactically and technically proficient themselves. They can't supervise what they do not know.

National Guard leaders are not held accountable for their self development, and as a result, sometimes demonstrate a lack of a sense of responsibility.³⁰ For the bulk of the year, unit full-time support personnel make many of the unit's decisions. Unit advisors and Readiness Group personnel also "help" unit

leaders make decisions. All these factors contribute to the mindset that "that job belongs to someone else."

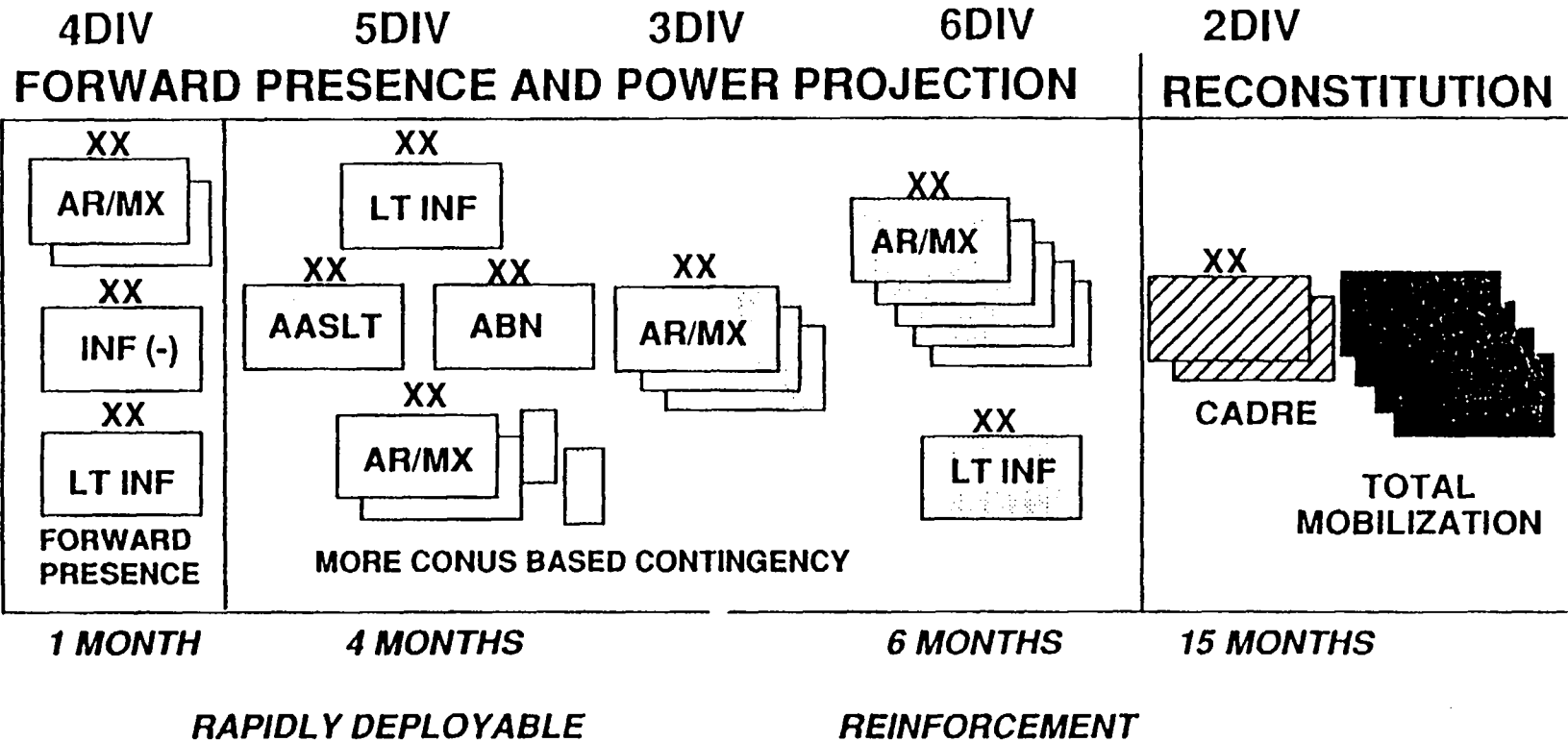
The social climate in the National Guard has an effect on leadership. Soldiers in a National Guard unit are generally from the same small town; some soldiers in the unit may even be from the same family. Some employees find themselves "in charge" of their bosses. This social climate breeds perceptions of favoritism and inequity.³¹ Leaders are paid to make hard decisions, but in this environment, it would take the exceptional leader to be effective.

THE NONCOMMISSIONED OFFICER CORPS

The most widespread problem in the National Guard concerns the Noncommissioned Officer Corps. The National Guard NCO Corps simply does not meet the standards of the traditional NCO Corps. If the NCOs are truly the backbone of the Army, then it is no wonder that the National Guard has problems in training readiness. NCOs are the primary trainers of soldiers, other NCOs, crews, sections, and squads. The problem lies in one word -- proficiency.

This is not to say that these NCOs don't love the Army or their country. Many are fiercely patriotic. When you ask these NCOs about their ability to go to war, you get a spirited "can

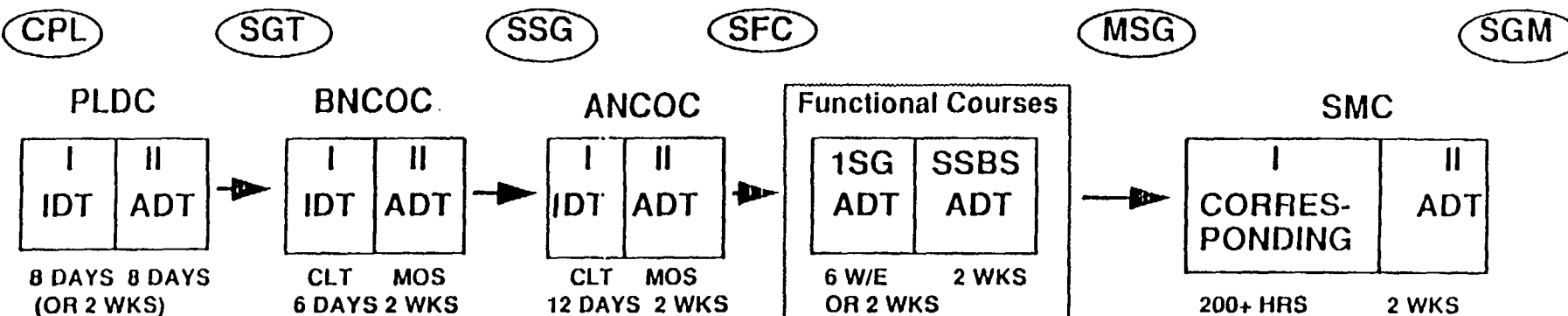
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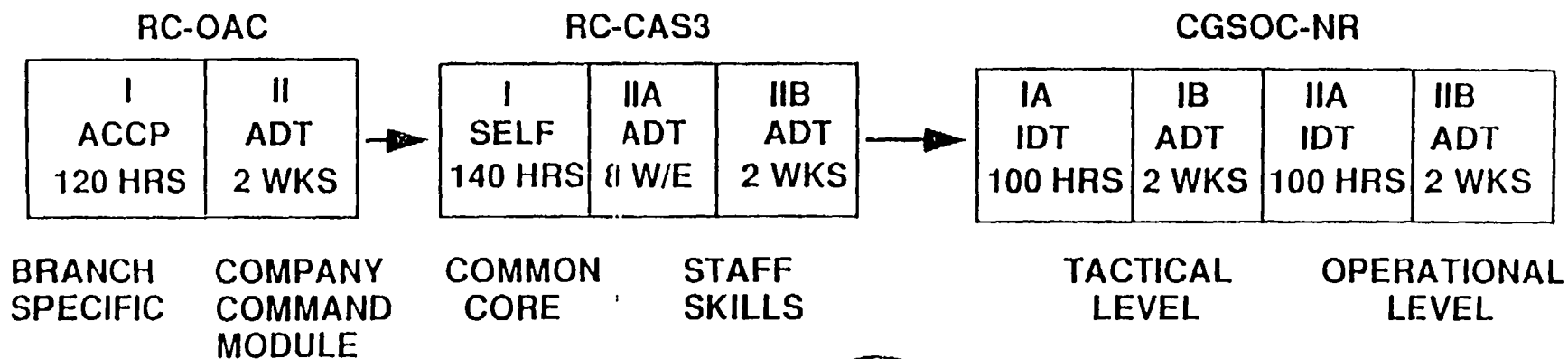
ACTIVE UNITS
 RESERVE UNITS
 CADRE UNITS
 UNITS FORMED AFTER MOBILIZATION



RC-NCOES



RC-OES



MAJ

LTC

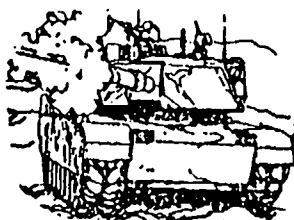
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SOURCE: DAMO-TR/ROBTF

DAMO-TR

RC ROUNDOUT BRIGADES

(FUTURE)



PRE-MOB TNG

(EMBED LEADER TRAINING)
(110% PERS, 85% CREW QUAL)

(39 days ANNUALLY)

MOBILIZE

(7 days)

M - DAY

POST-MOB TNG TO C1

2 METL TASKS
(ATTACK/ DEFEND)

(35-40 days)

DIV TNG

DEPLOY

(15-20 days)

M + 60

AVAILABLE FOR DEPLOYMENT = M+60

Source: DAMO-TR/ROBT

DAMO TR

do." But high hopes and esprit de corps do not win battles or wars unless coupled with knowledge, experience and leadership.

For the maintenance system in any battalion to function effectively there must be active involvement by the NCO's. All three of the reports cited maintenance shortcomings directly attributable to poor supervision and poor technical ability by the NCO Corps in general. Most NCO's do not know how to perform the mandatory maintenance on their vehicles or how to properly fill out a DA Form 2404, which is the required maintenance worksheet.³² If daily PMCS is not performed on all vehicles and equipment the maintenance system is doomed to failure. Does this have an effect on the vehicle operational readiness rate? During DESERT SHIELD postmobilization training, roundout battalions with a 50 percent vehicle availability rate (the Army standard is 90 percent) were not uncommon.³³ In one battle at the NTC a National Guard battalion had more non-mission capable vehicles in the field trains than crossed the line of departure.³⁴ The outcome of that battle was determined before the first shot was fired.

A look at the National Guard NCO Corps reveals a striking age difference when compared with NCOs of the Active Component. Fifty year old platoon sergeants, fifty-five year old first sergeants and sergeants major who are fifty-eight to sixty are not unusual.³⁵ How can men of this age meet the physical

fitness requirements of the Army? How can they lead combat arms soldiers in combat?

Why is this NCO Corps so old? One reason is that there is no central control of the promotion system. It is generally not a competitive system and varies greatly from state to state. The usual basis for promotion is time in the unit, attendance record, and a willingness to perform the job. Some positions are filled by the State Headquarters announcing vacancies and applicants submitting required forms.³⁶ Why do NCOs stay until they are too old? They like being a part of the unit, they need the money, and the unit needs people to fill the rolls.

As stated earlier, most NCOs do attend required RC Non-commissioned Officer Education System (NCOES) courses. The programs of instruction are approved by TRADOC to ensure the course meets Army standards. But because of the nature of RC training, a tremendous amount of information is taught in very compressed time periods. Retention of the material has always been a concern.³⁷ Combine this with the lack of a sense of individual responsibility for sustainment training and you get the predictable skill decay.

All of this goes back to basic leadership. To be respected by soldiers, a leader must demonstrate proficiency as a soldier and trainer. A leader must have the trust and confidence of his

soldiers in order to lead them in combat. Another critical aspect of NCO leadership is coaching and mentoring (as articulated in our leadership manuals), but the very foundations of coaching and mentoring are knowledge and proficiency, which are the very weaknesses of the National Guard NCO Corps.

SOLUTIONS

How do we address these training challenges? The only difference in training challenges between active duty and reserves is time available to train. As with a lot of the problems in our Army, solutions must start at unit level. Unit commanders must begin with a critical assessment of their unit's ability to accomplish wartime missions.

** First, hold each soldier, especially the NCOs and officers, accountable for individual skill proficiency at his required skill level. As soldiers and leaders, we have a PERSONAL responsibility to be proficient in the profession of arms to whatever skill level is required of our duty position.¹³ This is a daunting task given today's complex battlefield. Senior leaders must first set the example and then hold their subordinates accountable for the required levels of skill proficiency. Ask soldiers and leaders if they would allow themselves to be operated on by a doctor who was only 50%

proficient. Would they want their sons or daughters going to war with a leader who was only 60% proficient?

** Performance indicators such as Skill Qualification Test results, Common Task Test results, and Expert Infantryman Badge Test results can be used to evaluate individual proficiency.

** Unit commanders can allocate training time each week (or at monthly IDT for the RC) for NCOs to train their soldiers to sustain skills.

** Weapons skill training (i.e. Basic Rifle Marksmanship) should be conducted before any weapon is fired.

** Units must have professional development programs for the leaders, using a combination of lectures on tactics and techniques, hands on training, practical exercise and a professional reading program. Skill proficiency must be tied to promotion.

** Demonstrated performance should be rewarded with promotion. Substandard performance should result in counseling and retraining.

How does the training manager in the battalion assess training requirements? The Army's Readiness Reporting System is

not much help to the battalion commander in determining his training requirements. Systems can be designed to capture the objective data available in the company training rooms and organize it in a way that is useful to the leaders. As the company commander and his leaders collect this data, they automatically identify training requirements. The operations section of the battalion then compiles the data into a battalion roll-up. At monthly training meetings the company commanders, first sergeants, the staff, the CSM and commander define short and long term training requirements. This data will enable the unit to focus on the most critical training requirements and allocate the appropriate resources. Sound familiar? This process can be found in FM 25-100, Training the Force. This process would be of great benefit in the National Guard as time and resources are always short. This system would also allow the commander to make a more informed decision on the training readiness of the battalion for the Unit Status Report.

ARMY INITIATIVES

The Roundout Brigade Task Force (ROBTF), formed by the Army Chief of Staff, has reviewed all three reports cited in this article, as well as other information. To date the ROBTF has identified 30 issues covering all aspects of the roundout brigades mobilization and training. The task force has also

recommended and obtained Army approval for changes to the National Guard officer and NCO education system. Chart 3 depicts the changes which are designed to tie promotion to schooling. These changes were implemented when the Army Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Plans signed policy messages in Oct 91 for the Officer Education System and in Dec 91 for the NCO Education System.³⁹ Issues that the ROBTf is studying also include various training strategies (an example of which is in chart 4) and changes to Unit Readiness Reporting and the 1-R Evaluation System.

As a result of these initiatives, U.S. Army Forces Command (FORSCOM) has designed an Action Plan, named BOLD SHIFT, that will involve the Total Army and will ensure that RC readiness is improved. BOLD SHIFT is designed to "exploit the potential of Reserve Forces to execute their important roles in the current National Military Strategy."⁴⁰

The plan is based on insights and lessons learned from Desert Shield and Desert Storm. The concept includes a series of readiness enhancement programs and calls for aggressive and positive interaction between the AC and RC. To address issues and recommend initiatives, FORSCOM has established a BOLD SHIFT task force composed of FORSCOM staff, National Guard, U.S. Army Reserve Command, Continental U.S. Armies (geographic commands that have training responsibility for reserve component units)

and representatives from the Roundout Brigades.

The FORSCOM pilot program will include all Roundout and Roundup Brigades and 35 USAR/ARNG priority units. Reserve Component readiness enhancement efforts are focused on seven training and readiness programs:

1. Reorganize and realign in accordance with the plan for downsizing the Army.
2. Emergency Deployment and Readiness Exercises to provide readiness focus, incentive and recognition of minutemen in early deploying RC units.
3. Soldier training to review and improve current soldier MOS training.
4. Unit training enhancements modeled after the methodology for premobilization RC collective training in accordance with Desert Shield Roundout Brigade training.
5. Leader training development to ensure leaders have better skills, knowledge and command presence.
6. More involvement in RC training and readiness by the AC wartime chain of command.
7. Improve readiness of priority RC units by enhancing quality and effectiveness of full time support personnel to include study of full time support methodology and policies."

THE FUTURE OF RC READINESS REPORTING

Both the DAIG and GAO reports cite problems with readiness reporting.⁴² The Army needs to look hard at changing how we evaluate training readiness. The Unit Status Report contains objective criteria in all areas except training, which is largely subjective. This subjectivity is the foundation of the Army readiness problem, but it is more profound in the ARNG because of lack of experience.

Was the readiness reporting system a source of problems in the mobilization and training of the three National Guard roundout brigades? The short answer is yes. Because of the subjective nature of training readiness reporting, all three of the brigades reported higher training readiness than was evidenced at postmobilization. This is not just an RC problem: these readiness reports were reviewed by their parent active duty divisions. Why didn't these reports get a more objective and critical evaluation by the AC chain of command? The reason is that there is a wide variety of opinions of how AC commanders view the National Guard readiness standards. For example, one commander of a division, which had a Guard roundout brigade commented on his prewar beliefs regarding postmobilization training this way "... I believed that it would have taken 120 days to get the brigade ready for combat. I had intended to infuse active component officers into the brigade and to replace

battalion and company executive officers from the active component. The brigade should not have deployed immediately. National Guard combat maneuver brigades can deploy and fight immediately, but with enormously high risk and at the cost of many casualties."⁴³ In spite of this pragmatic view of roundout brigade readiness, this division commander had consistently reviewed (and approved) brigade training readiness ratings of C2 -- ready for combat with two weeks of additional training. Another division commander, whose division also included one of the three roundout brigades stated that "I would take my roundout units to war tomorrow, if necessary."⁴⁴ The views of these two senior AC officers are in sharp disagreement, but are representative of the magnitude of the problem.

The studies identified numerous shortcomings in the 1-R Evaluation System. This system mandates that a detailed evaluation report is written by the AC evaluator at the conclusion of Annual Training. This report serves as the basis for the training plan for the following year as well as serves as a de facto report card for the commander. The Inspector General report was particularly damning: "The postmobilization performance of all units left little doubt that most AC evaluators had generally inflated 1-R Reports and that skills had seriously eroded because of elapsed time since AT. ...Shortfalls in crew proficiency were not clearly and unmistakably enunciated in the 1-Rs. For example, most M-1 crews did not know how to

boresight their tank weapons. ...One brigade received a "T" (indicating a trained status) in support operations on its last 1-R. The unit's performance during training, however, revealed serious systemic breakdowns in combat support (CS) and combat service support (CSS) operations."⁴⁵ Both the DAIG and GAO reports recommend specific changes to this evaluation system, as does the ROBTf. There is an institutional resistance to changes to our evaluation system, but we cannot ignore the obvious problems any longer.

Another problem cited in the reports is that Army and FORSCOM regulations tasked the National Guard to do too much. The requirements for National Guard units in AR 11-30 (The Army CAPSTONE Program), FORSCOM Regulation 350-4 (Training Under CAPSTONE), FORSCOM/NGB Regulation 350-2 (Reserve Component Training), AR 220-1 (Unit Status Reporting), and FM 25-100 (Training the Force), are a tremendous challenge.⁴⁶ Unrealistic demands and broad training objectives combined with limited training time is a recipe for mediocrity. The National Guard, especially the roundout brigades, need a training strategy that focuses on individual, leader and crew skill proficiency and sustainment. Premobilization collective training must concentrate on drills and collective tasks up to and including platoons. Additionally, leaders and staffs need specialized training on staff estimates, course of action formulation, staff coordination, operations order drills and battle synchronization.

The AC commander responsible for the roundout units must be more involved in the training and evaluation process. He should approve the annual training plan, be included in the rating scheme for battalion and brigade commanders, and have an input in the selection of new battalion and brigade commanders."

CONCLUSIONS

Since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the world has changed dramatically. No one was able to predict the events that led up to that momentous event or even subsequent events concerning the breakup of the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact. Can anyone predict what the world will be like in one year? Two or five years? While the superpower confrontation of the last 40 years is gone, most experts agree that the world is far from stable. There are still serious threats to U.S. national security.

The military forces of the United States have carried much of the burden that has given us world peace since World War II. With the world in a transition period between the Cold War and the future, stability is the key. War has been the one constant since the beginning of mankind, and if history is an accurate predictor, we will have war in our future.

The National Military Strategy 1992 is the best strategy to keep the United States the leader of the world. The Base Force is necessary to protect the vital interests of the country. This force is under assault from political factions in Congress. The bureaucratic politics involved in reshaping the Army are complex, intense and ongoing. Bureaucratic politics is defined by Graham T. Allison in Essence of Decision: "what happens is not chosen as a solution to a problem but rather results from compromise, conflict, and confusion of officials with diverse interests and unequal influence;" The challenge facing our country is to not let bureaucratic politics compromise our nation's security.

Readiness issues concerning the RC, especially the National Guard roundout brigades, have direct impact on our national security. The National Military Strategy calls for forces that respond "rapidly" and "quickly" to developing situations. Only active duty combat forces can meet this requirement. Because of systemic limitations on the readiness of reserve forces, they cannot be part of combat contingency forces. But National Guard combat units are critical to the reconstitution phase of mobilization. Their challenge is to be ready for deployment after 90-120 days of postmobilization training.

The Army must have the right mix of active and reserve forces to support the National Military Strategy. We must reduce

RC forces in concert with the reductions of the AC and address the systemic readiness problems inherent in the RC. Failure to address these issues is disservice to our country.

END NOTES

1. National Military Strategy 1992, Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Pg 6.
2. NMS, Pg 4.
3. NMS, Pg 8.
4. NMS, Pg 7.
5. NMS, Pg 16.
6. NMS, Pg 10.
7. NMS, Pg 9.
8. NMS, Pg 13.
9. NMS, Pg 2.
10. Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Plans, DAMO-FDY, Briefing Subj: RC End Strength 92-95.
11. ODCSOPS, DAMO-FDY, Briefing Subj: RC End Strength 92-95.
12. ODCSOPS, DAMO-FDZ, Msg, Subj: FY 92-95 ARNG Force Reductions, 10 April 91.
13. ODCSOPS, DAMO-FDZ, Msg Subj: FY 92-95 USAR Force Reductions, 12 April 91.
14. National Guard Bureau, NGB-ARF-I, Ltr 1 April 91, Subj: FY 92-95 ARNG Force Reductions; Office of the Chief of the Army Reserve, DAAR-FMF, Ltr 3 April 91, Subj: FY 92-95 USAR Force Reductions.
15. Congressional Record-House, Nov 18, 1991.
16. The National Defense Appropriations Act, 1992.
17. ODCSOPS, DAMO-FD, Decision Briefing to Chief of Staff Army, Plan for RC Inactivations FY92-95, 26 Nov 1991.
18. Department of the Army Inspector General, Special Assessment of the National Guard Brigades' Mobilization, June 91, Chapter 3, pgs 3-4, 3-5, 3-7, Chapter 4, pg 4-3.

General Accounting Office, NATIONAL GUARD: Peacetime Training Did Not Adequately Prepare Combat Brigades for Gulf War, Sept 91, Chapter 2, pgs 12, 13, 16, and 18.

Congressional Research Service, The Army's Roundout Concept After the Persian Gulf War, Robert L. Goldich, Foreign Affairs and National Defense Division, 22 Oct 91, pgs 21,22.

19. DAIG Report, Ch 3, pgs 3-6, 3-14, 3-15, Ch 4, pg 4-8
GAO Report, Ch 2, pgs 13, 14.

20. DAIG Report, Ch 3, pg 3-4
GAO Report, Ch 2, pgs 14-16.

21. DAIG Report, Ch 3, pgs 3-6, 3-7
GAO Report, Ch 2, pg 18.

22. DAIG Report, Ch 3, pg 3-7
GAO Report, Ch 2, pg 18.

23. DAIG Report, Ch 2, pgs 2-7, 2-8, Ch 3, pgs 3-5, 3-12
GAO Report, Ch 3.

24. DAIG Report, Ch 3, pg 3-9, Ch 4, pg 4-15
GAO Report, Ch 3, pgs 24, 25, 26.

25. FM 100-5, Operations, May 86, Ch 2, pg 17.

26. The author acknowledges that 39 days of training for RC units may be an oversimplification. The legal minimum for members of the RC are 48 weekend drills (24 days) and a 15 day Annual Training. Many leaders of the ARNG actually put in 50-60 days per year. AC units, on the other hand, average 120 days of collective training, while ARNG units are hard pressed to have up to 20 days of collective training per year. In fact, most ARNG units only spend nine days doing collective training. This is not a slam on the ARNG, just the reality of available time to train towards combat/mission proficiency.

27. The author's assignments included: Aide de Camp to Commander Second U.S. Army, Ft Gillem, Ga; Battalion Executive Officer, 3-7 In (M), Ft Stewart, Ga (training association with the GA ARNG); and Battalion Commander, 2-18 In (M), 197 INf Bde, Ft Benning, Ga (training association with separate mech infantry brigades in SC and NC). The author acknowledges professional bias based on his experience.